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DE RUEHDBU #0278 0420631  
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FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6673  
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY 1397  
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 0299  
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1403  
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 0523  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1341  
RUEHVV/ISLAMIC CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1283  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1371  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0245  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1315  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
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SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN'S RECENT UPSURGE IN VIOLENCE HIGHLIGHTED BY  
GOVERNMENT HYPE

11. (SBU) Since the beginning of the year, the local media have reported a number of killings of government security officials. The Tajik government often linked the murders to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). However, no credible links to the IMU have been proven. Because of the reported up-tick in violence, the Tajik government has increased the number of border troops on alert and patrolling-law enforcement officials throughout the country. Government sources tell Post's Senior Law Enforcement Advisor (SLEA) that President Rahmonov has met with security ministers three or four times since the beginning of January.

12. (SBU) The press reported that members of the IMU attacked the Kairakum prison in Sughd Oblast to release a fellow member on January 25. In the process, a prison official was killed. One of the attackers is reportedly the brother of the freed inmate. Embassy sources said it is not certain the attackers and inmates belong to the IMU, but may be simply involved in criminal organizations. Border troops were sent to Sughd Oblast to control Tajikistan's northern border with Kyrgyzstan and search for the attackers, who may come from the Tajik border town of Isfara.

13. (SBU) Another recent high-profile murder was of the Head of the Military Institute, Hokimsho Hofizov, assassinated on January 27. The press speculates that Oleg Kosolapov, a former colleague of Colonel Mahmud Khudoberdiyev, was involved in the murder. (NOTE: Khudoberdiyev, in the opposition during the Tajik Civil War, is now exiled in Uzbekistan where he is widely believed to be supported by Uzbek security forces. He was an ally of Hofizov, until Hofizov turned against him and sided with Tajikistan's ruling government. END NOTE.)

14. (SBU) In addition, a source from the Ministry of Interior told SLEA that nine police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year. The number includes border guards, officers killed by landmines, and officers killed in firefights

with drug traffickers. Two law-enforcement officials were recently murdered in Khorog. The majority of reported incidents occurred along the Tajik-Afghan border.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: The recent crimes may be the result of internal government strife, corruption, drug-related disputes, or IMU or other extremists' attacks - the kind of unfortunately normal criminal-political violence that occurs in any country like Tajikistan. The Tajik government may be blaming the violence on the IMU as a way to divert attention from internal issues. But it is important to note that this is a low level of violence for any country. In a presidential election year, the emphasis on publicizing security problems could possibly be a government desire to show the people that Tajikistan is not yet completely secure and the need exists for continuity at the top to ensure stability. Post considers the overall political situation in Tajikistan to be extremely stable. Regardless of which theory eventually proves true, none of the violence is directed towards Western or, specifically, American interests. END COMMENT.

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